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TWO RECENT AMERICAN CLASSICS.

It is the business of the literary critic to fight for the chiefs who have fallen on the field of letters, to drag their bodies from the heap of the slain, to build their pyre and see that they have due funeral honors. Or if this is too heroic a strain, the critic may be compared to Scott's "Old Mortality," who went about among the graveyards, freshening up the headstones and recarving the names of the martyred dead. We do not do enough of this sort of thing in America, at least in our periodicals. "Out of sight, out of mind." What we do is to wait for anniversaries, when at one fell swoop we jumble together our impressions of our great men. During the intervals we allow their names to be obscured, their books to drop listlessly from our hands. A continual modest service in the temple of fame would be better for their reputation. To change the figure, it is by the frequent assaying of the ore of literature that we get at last its value and determine the intellectual riches of a nation.

Stedman and Aldrich are two of our last inheritors of renown whose claims have not yet been adjudged, whose ghosts indeed have hardly yet come into that arena where the struggle for immortality is on. In their earlier life they were overshadowed by our older group of poets; and they fell on evil days in the end, when the waters of oblivion seemed to rise and roll over everything that was distinguished, that had the stamp of poetry and pure art. Aldrich has been rescued from the engulfing tide by Mr. Greenstreet in a biography which is a model of tact and taste. Stedman still awaits his memorial.

Both these men were primarily poets. Like wine, poetry seems to require a certain time to ripen and mellow. What is minor poetry to contemporaries often comes of age and discloses quite adult qualities. Neither Aldrich nor Stedman, though popular in a way, was taken quite seriously when alive; but they are good being gone.

Both men, too, were essentially lyric poets. What they essayed in other fields of verse, narrative or dramatic, will hardly be counted in the canon of their work. As both were forced to depend mainly on prose writing or on editorial labors for a livelihood, their output in poetry is

not large. A comparison of the two may perhaps help to bring out the qualities that each possessed.

In lyric poetry, there are three prime factors—the movement or lilt of the verse, the richness and pregnancy of the words, and the originality and importance of the theme. Of these, the first is overwhelmingly the most important. Lyrical poetry is song, and its winged rush of sound is what carries it to the heart and head. The poorest words, the most meagre thoughts, will live if they are associated with some gush of lyric verse, some thrilling or unexpected movement of metre which the senses find memorable. Mother Goose's melodies hold their place. In narrative poetry the second quality—that of loveliness or majesty of diction—is predominant; and in dramatic work it is the theme, evolved through character, which is all-important. Of course, in a perfect work of poetry, long or short, all these elements ought to combine and form a final flower of art. And of course they are seldom distinctly separable. We cannot put our finger here or here, and say that this is music, and this is expression, and this is theme. Poems are not made like a pound-cake—a cupful of this, a cupful of that, and a pinch of the other. But we can usually recognize the predominant characteristic of a poem and discern the principal gift of the poet.

Stedman, both by nature and conviction, was a singer. He carried his belief in the song-element of poetry into his criticism, frequently to the injury of his critical poise. This belief accounts for his preferring Hood to Arnold, for his adoration of Swinburne, for his overestimate of Lanier. All the poems which bear the stamp of his right genius have a spontaneity, a heartiness as if they were written by the blood itself, in their metre and movement. Sometimes this spontaneity is perhaps rather cheap, as in "The Diamond Wedding." Sometimes, as in "Bohemia," "The Ballad of Lager Bier," or "How Old Brown Took Harper's Ferry," it is reminiscent of Tennyson or Thackeray or Lowell. But in a considerable group of his poems, such as "Country Sleighing," "Anonyma," and "Pan in Wall Street," his music is his own, is a new thing.

Aldrich's melodies are more of the mind, echoes from haunted chambers of the brain. He has little spontaneity, though in some of his early pieces—the ballad of "Baby Bell" and "When the Sultan Goes to Ispahan"—there

is the same throb, the same clear and open note, as in Stedman. But his characteristic music is secret and unexpected, ethereal incantations. All his lyrics are poems,—they are not songs. And, indeed, even Stedman, with his far more obvious and easy lilt, never wrote a piece which any considerable number of people would want to sing.

In the great quality of expression, in pregnancy, pomp, or perfection of words, neither poet had a great deal to boast of. Without doing them the disfavor of bringing against them the large utterance of our early poetic gods, it may be said that there is a secondary American poet, with whom they had much in common, who may be called upon to test them. It may be doubted if there is anything in Stedman or Aldrich which for concentration of style or loveliness of diction equals the best work of Fitz-Greene Halleck—the starred, flushed, faceted passages of "Alnwick Castle," "Bozaris," or the poem to Burns.

"Wild roses by the Abbey towers
Are gay in their young bud and bloom;
They were born of a race of funeral-flowers
That garlanded, in long-gone hours,
A templar's knightly tomb."

No, our recent classics have not the classic cast and color of diction of poems like these. Even Dr. Holmes in the one passage where he stands tiptoe on the pinnacle of expression, surpasses them:

"The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom."

Aldrich has more of the wonder and glory of words than Stedman, but his is a frail splendor at its best,—like the cloud-wraiths after the sunset's fires have left them. Two of his sonnets, that on "Sleep" and the "Enamored Architect of Airy Rhyme," are the liminary outposts of his domain of words. Aldrich may be said to be the greatest master of the theme among American lyrical poets. Given a mood, a fancy, a fragrant thought, and he presents it in its naked simplicity, so that it stamps itself on the reader's mind and haunts him with its significance. And there is a large group of his poems in which this thematic power is exhibited. Among them are "Identity," "Memory," "Prescience," "Untimely Thought," "Destiny," "Apparitions." In their kind they are almost unique. Odd as it may sound, he may have trained his gift for this piercing forthright kind of poem from his long handling of light verse. *Vers de société* do not require pomp of phrase or special

richness of music. They are better for having nothing to call away the attention from the neat setting forth of central idea or scene. Aldrich's "Palabras Cariñosas" and "Thalia" are in their way as simple and direct as his poignant tragic studies.

Some of Stedman's later poems show this same thematic effect. Both poets were influenced by the spirit of the age, which had, temporarily at least, turned away from the physical, male, aristocratic God of poetry, towards the spiritual, womanly, democratic Muse. In prose Stedman was the critic, and Aldrich the novelist and short-story writer. Some may think the functions should have been reversed. In view of Aldrich's letters, which have lately been published, it is impossible to doubt that his literary judgment was surer, his taste keener, than Stedman's. When they clashed in opinion, Aldrich was always right. And Stedman, in his narrative poems of "The Blameless Prince" and "Alice of Monmouth," gave evidence of creative gifts, the power over elemental human nature, superior to Aldrich's talents in this kind. If Stedman had written novels, his figures would have moved in heavier marching order than Aldrich's light skirmish-line. But Stedman took up the critic's burden, and gave us what is on the whole our largest body of sound literary appreciation. It is impossible to over-praise his devotion to the highest manifestations of literary art. He compelled America for awhile to attend to poetry, something which no one since has succeeded in doing. He had his quota of defects as a critic. He was too temperate in his eulogy of the best, and too tolerant in his treatment of the mediocre. He kept to the *via media*, which, though safe, is hardly the path of revelation. The great mass of his judgments are good,—they will stand; but the question is, whether posterity will care to refer to them. They are in the main contemporary judgments, and it is a great deal easier to be wise and pregnant and penetrating about the literature of the past than about that which is rising around one. Every critic has his defects. Stedman's Waterloo was his judgment on Arnold, whose merits, either in prose or verse, he seemed incapable of seeing.

Aldrich's prose works were so fresh, so sparkling, that judicious readers hailed them as a special dispensation,—the art of France made decorous for American homes. Read over again now, a good deal of them seems thin; the sparkle has somewhat evaporated. But they

have by no means gone flat like stale champagne, and the scaling down of their pretensions is the fate to which nearly all fiction has to submit. The novel and the short-story seem almost as evanescent as the art of the theatre.

Aldrich invented an art of the short-story of his own; and it was an invention which needed no patent, for no one could infringe upon it without detection. Perhaps he used his trick of surprise too often. But his short stories are still readable, and are likely to keep their place with those of a half-dozen of our best recent artists. They certainly do not class with those of the older men—Poe, Hawthorne, or Irving. Of his novelettes, "Prudence Palfrey" has a cool, virginal charm; there has hardly been a better embodiment in prose of New England life. The opening pages of "The Queen of Sheba" promise a masterpiece, and though it falls off in the end it is still a delightful thing. "The Story of a Bad Boy" is unique in its charm and in its healthy humor. Mass and velocity, Aldrich did not have. And by mass we do not mean length. A great artist can make the carving of a cherry-stone colossal, as witness some of Shakespeare's and Milton's sonnets. But grace and pleasantness appeal, and Aldrich's prose has enough of these qualities to make it permanently enduring.

We are told that we should not try to classify and rank masterpieces—that we should not look gift-horses in the mouth. The game of precedence is an old one, however, and we probably shall have to keep it up. No one can foretell how Aldrich and Stedman will finally come to stand in our roll of writers; but no one would now claim for them an equality with the elder gods of our literature—with Poe, or Emerson, or Bryant. Nor have they the power and magnificence of that more mortal monarch, Lowell. The romance writers—Irving, Hawthorne, Cooper—are larger figures. But they are likely to have no mean place among the rest,—with Longfellow, so melodious and soothing, yet so essentially unoriginal, so plumb to the average; with Whittier, that Quaker volcano who instead of fire spouted half-fused stones and homely earth; or with Whitman, with his amorphous verse and his doctrines borrowed from Emerson and the Hindus and badly understood. A little art of great excellence will hold its own with masses of inferior quality. Aldrich and Stedman have hardly had their just dues, either in life or as yet in death.

CHARLES LEONARD MOORE.

CASUAL COMMENT.

THE GREAT EVENT OF THE COMING PUBLISHING SEASON IN ENGLAND will be, according to the London "Nation," the issue of the eleventh edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica." The time of the publication will be about the beginning of November, when, in contrast with the earlier method of publishing one volume at a time, fourteen volumes of the twenty-eight will see the light, and will be followed in about three months' time by the remaining fourteen volumes, which include the Index. It may be said at once of this great venture, to which Mr. Hugh Chisholm and his able staff have devoted eight laborious years, that, first, it is essentially a new book—in one volume, for example, not more than sixteen per cent of the old material has been used—and, secondly, that it is authoritative throughout. Its fifteen hundred contributors cover all the learned institutions of the world, and include a great body of practical workers and experts in their departments of thought and life. Many of these first-class authorities have written, not only the longer articles, but the brief notices which are usually assigned to less accomplished students. In a word, the new Encyclopædia represents a thoroughly fresh and complete work of specialization. The great novelty on the mechanical side of the venture is the issue on India paper, in a form in which a volume of over nine hundred pages can be read and even turned back on its cover with the greatest ease. A further advantage is cheapness; each volume will be issued at a little more than half the price of its predecessor. The work, as a whole, is beyond doubt a very great feat of British scholarship and literary organization.

THE OLDEST INSTITUTION OF LEARNING IN THE WORLD is probably the University of El Ashar, at Cairo, founded by the great Saladin in the year 988, and occupying an ancient mosque in the Arab quarter of the city. Here, sitting at the foot of a column assigned him by the particular descendant of the Prophet who chances at the time to be Chancellor of the University, any reputable man of learning may gather around him such disciples as his fame or ability succeeds in attracting. Eight thousand five hundred and ten such learners are enrolled in the latest catalogue; or, at least, Patterson's "College and School Directory" gives that as the number. One is almost sorry to read that recently a wealthy Egyptian, some Rockefeller of the Nile, has left a generous bequest for the erection of a new building, so that the rambling old mosque, a series of cloisters surrounding open courts and covering several acres of space, is likely to be deserted ere long, perhaps to be torn down. What a contrast to our smart groups of laboratories, museums, lecture-rooms, libraries, and dormitories, which constitute the visible and tangible parts of our universities, is this old Egyptian seminary of learning! Contemplating its millennium of educational activity, and learning

further, from the above-named "Directory," that there are no fewer than thirty-six other universities that were founded before the end of the fifteenth century, one loses something of one's pride in the antiquity of Harvard and Yale and Columbia. In educational history they are but toddling infants.

OF INTEREST TO SHAKESPEARE LOVERS everywhere is the project, recently formulated in the London "Times" over the signatures of seventeen prominent literary men, to acquire by public subscription "The Shakespeare Head Press" at Stratford-upon-Avon, and to make of it a permanent centre for the publication of Shakespearian literature. This Press, it will be recalled, was established in 1904 by Mr. A. H. Bullen (known to all who know Elizabethan literature), with the primary object of issuing from the poet's native town a worthy edition of his works. That edition, completed some time ago, stands as a monument of dignified bookmaking—a worthy modern successor of the noble old folios. Other publications, of less importance but all distinctive in form and contents, have appeared from the Press at intervals; and Mr. Bullen has now in preparation a volume embodying Professor Wallace's full presentation of his recent sensational Shakespeare discoveries. The Press occupies the house in Stratford once leased by Julius Shaw, an intimate friend of Shakespeare and one of the witnesses to his will. Not the least of the perennial charms of Stratford to the literary pilgrim is a ramble through this quaint old Tudor house, with its timbered ceilings and massive chimney and lovely old-world garden "circumwalled with brick." It is peculiarly fitting that Mr. Bullen's pious labors should find habitation here; and we have no doubt that Shakespeare lovers in America will count it an honor to bear their part in the plan now in progress toward lifting all financial incubus from his shoulders and making the Press a permanent addition to Stratford's noble memorials of her poet.

SAN FRANCISCO'S SEVENTY LIBRARIES, as enumerated and briefly described in the July number of "News Notes of California Libraries," betoken unusual and very creditable activity in this branch of public education. Already, only four years after the destructive earthquake and fire of 1906, the public library of the city has acquired respectable proportions, 98,499 being the reported number of volumes now in its possession, with a main building and three branches from which to circulate them. Among the seventy and more libraries and reading or reference rooms enumerated, we note the "Chinese Reading Society Reading Room. Wong Kin, Sec. Est. July, 1908. Income from monthly subscriptions of 50 cts. a member. A[bout] 50 members. Open daily. Rents room in Kong Ha Tong bldg., 145 Waverly place near Washington st., \$30 per mo. One corner of room is occupied, rent free, by a barber, who looks after reading room. 30 Chinese newspapers rec'd regularly, 10 from

Chinese consul." But when will John Chinaman reach the point of using our American public libraries, together with his fellow-aliens from Germany and Sweden and Italy and other old-world countries? A pig-tail in a public library—has such a sight ever been seen? And will it ever be?

A RAILROAD TEST OF THE POPULARITY OF THE CLASSICS was recently made by a large middle-Western road in its placing of sets of the Eliot five-foot-shelf books in the library cars of its express trains. That Marcus Aurelius and John Woolman and their comrades should have failed to captivate the commercial traveller and other patrons of the road is not at all to the discredit of Dr. Eliot's chosen authors, nor very much to the discredit of the travellers. The mood of neither the pleasure tourist nor the business traveller is suited to the reading of so serious literature as that embraced in the Eliot list; and it was doubtless in tardy recognition of this fact that the company decided to withdraw the unappreciated volumes and leave its patrons to the undisputed enjoyment of their newspapers, their ten-cent magazines, their fifty-cent paper-covered novels—and their cigars. The ideal traveller would of course be glad to relieve the monotony of transit across the western prairies by losing himself in Homer or Shakespeare, in Plutarch or Pliny; but those who purvey to the literary tastes of a trainload of more or less tired and worried and fretful folk, have to face a condition, not a theory.

TWO CURIOUS REASONS FOR THE ENGLISH LIKING OF AMERICAN NOVELS have been discovered by the London literary correspondent of a New York journal. As they are almost the last that might have occurred to one, they are worth giving. Careful investigation has revealed to this inquirer that the English middle-class mother feels it safe, as a rule, to entrust an American work of fiction, unread, to the hands of her daughter or daughters, which is more than she dares do with the more "advanced" native productions, especially when the latter are written by women. Secondly, the heroine of the American novel is well-gowned, at least by the illustrator, which is not so often the case with the ladies of English fiction. The existence of other causes for the increasing vogue of our novels in England is admitted by this authority; but who would have thought that correct conduct and correct costume would have proved so potent in swelling sales.

INTERBIBLIOTHECAL RIVALRY, like intercollegiate rivalry and business competition, has its admirable aspect, and also its less admirable. The yearly counting-up of circulation and attendance shows a commendable desire to keep all the patronage already won, and to win more; but it also reminds one of the daily newspaper's striving to outdo its competitors in circulation and in number of advertisements printed. A brief passage in the current annual report of the Galesburg Public Library fur-

nishes food for thought and for some mild amusement. The librarian, after naming certain reasons why the library was unable to do more than hold its own, adds: "Further than this, the Knox College library was reopened, and naturally took some of the student patronage from us. Moreover, this must be reckoned with in the future too, for as the college library becomes better equipped for the use of the students, their patronage, which has always been a large element in our work, will be transferred in a greater or less degree to the college library." Instead of a note of rejoicing at the increased library facilities of the community, one detects here a certain tone of sadness.

A MARK TWAIN MONUMENT IN HEIDELBERG, where the plan of "A Tramp Abroad" was conceived, is to be erected by the American colony there. This rather unexpected memorial will take the form of a statue of the great humorist, and the necessary fund has already been subscribed; at least so says the report from the university town on the Neckar. A statue of Mark Twain in Germany, whose language and whose manners and customs he delighted in poking fun at, and whose national genius is so radically unlike that of our American humorist, must strike the observer as something of an anomaly. On American soil must ultimately be erected, in some shape or other, the chief monument to him whose humor, while it contributed to the gaiety of many nations, was relished to the full only by his own.

PUBLICITY FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES, through local newspaper notices, quarterly or monthly bulletins, and other sufficiently decorous and dignified methods, seems legitimate and desirable. The Haverhill (Mass.) Public Library reports the appearance of such newspaper notices (gratuitously printed) on sixty-six days of last year. Thirty-three lists of new books, and thirty-three of books and articles on special subjects, were thus brought to the people's attention. The recorded circulation of nearly two hundred thousand, among a population of about forty-two thousand, may serve as a proof of the wisdom of this policy of publicity. It is to be noted, however, as in harmony with experience elsewhere, that the number of books lent to school-children through the schools, in that city, fell off last year to the extent of nearly eleven hundred. In this matter of bringing home to the town's people the fact that they own, and too often neglect to profit by, a fine collection of the very best literature, why might it not be well to secure for advertising purposes a portion of the omnipresent billboard, even at the risk of crowding out some of the regular announcements of things eatable, drinkable, smokable, and wearable?

PECUNIARY ENCOURAGEMENT FOR LITERARY TALENT, as proposed by Mr. Upton Sinclair, is favored by nine authors of note, whose letters to Mr. Sinclair are printed in a recent issue of "The Independent," as also are the protests from seven equally

well-known writers, to whose number Mr. Henry James, too unwell to write a letter, is to be added. His brother, the noted psychologist and pragmatist, puts the matter pithily: "In our scribbling age, what is publicly most needed seems to be some kind of machinery for suppressing literary production rather than stimulating it." Worn-out authors who have served faithfully the cause of good literature, and have received but scant material reward for their labors, he thinks might well be held worthy of a pension; but "as for the young, let them scratch as they may, and devil take the hindmost." In this age of Carnegie foundations and endowed research, and multiplying scholarships and fellowships, there would seem to be enough provision for first aid to the aspiring, without adding endowed authorships to the list.

WHAT BOOKS BESIDE NOVELS THE MASSES READ is indicated in the case of one of our large cities by a statistical table printed in the current annual report of the St. Louis Public Library. In a "list of non-fiction books circulating 100 times or more at the central library during the year, May, 1909—April, 1910," Mrs. Eddy's "Science and Health" scores 618 against 416 for its nearest competitor, Longfellow's poems, while Shakespeare's name comes rather near the end. It is comforting to find Bunyan, Fiske, Darwin, Goethe, and Emerson occupying places four to eight, a volume of "Choice Selections" standing third.

COMMUNICATION.

"CHANTECLER"—A CORRECTION.

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

In the review of Miss Gertrude Hall's translation of "Chantecler," published in your issue of August 16, on page 84, with our name at the bottom of the column, your reviewer, Mr. Lewis Piaget Shanks, makes the assertion that six lines have been omitted from the Prologue. With respect to our book this is a false statement, and one which we consider damaging. Six lines may have been omitted from "Hampton's Magazine" (we have not verified Mr. Shanks there); but he is wrong, as it happens, to assume that they were omitted also from our book. That it was an assumption seems proved by the fact that no copy of the book could possibly have reached your office before your issue containing the review was put to press.

DUFFIELD & COMPANY.

New York City, August 22, 1910.

[We are extremely sorry that our endeavor to give this important drama prompt review should have resulted in any injustice to the publishers of the book. Our reviewer's comments were of course based upon the magazine version; it being assumed, somewhat rashly, as now appears, that the magazine and book versions would be identical in form.—[EDR. THE DIAL.]

The New Books.

THE LIFE STORY OF AN ODD-JOB MAN.*

The one book that every man is supposed to have it in him to write has been produced by Mr. George Meek, who until recently pushed (or pulled) a bath chair at various beach-resorts in England, was for some years an active worker in the cause of Socialism, and at present enjoys the protection and countenance of Mr. H. G. Wells, who vouches for him in an interesting Introduction. He has also turned his hand to countless other casual occupations, including poetry; but, he says, "I have come to the conclusion that I have no vocation for verse-making, much less poetry, though a few odds and ends of mine have been printed and one song published with music: I have never heard of anyone singing it, however." These few quoted words give the keynote of the book,—dispassionate, detached, objective statement of facts, always well within the truth, and resorting to no art but the difficult one of entire naturalness. No wonder Mr. Wells declares that "he has produced a living work that will defy the embargo of Mr. Mudie and all the libraries"—an embargo which some of Mr. Meek's candor in the treatment of facts may very conceivably invite, while the polished and gilded eroticism of the "society novel" passes muster even before the severe scrutiny of "Miss Timmins" and her kind.

The vogue attained by such unvarnished accounts of hand-to-mouth existence as have been written by the late Josiah Flynt, by Mr. William H. Davies, by Mr. Lee Meriwether, and by other professional or amateur tramps, shows that readers enjoy having the hard realities of life served them (in good print and binding) without sauce; but they have seldom or never met with a more engrossing narrative of desperate poverty than this simple, yet in its way wonderfully eventful, life-history of a bath chair-man. There is in it no spectacular tramping or "bumming," no voluntary experience of prison life, though there is one involuntary term of imprisonment for debt, and no curious exploring of the purlieus of wickedness. It is just the unembroidered and unsensational record of an up-hill struggle for existence, and yet it is presented with such an unconscious artistry that it holds the attention from beginning to end.

*GEORGE MECK, BATH CHAIR-MAN. By Himself. With an Introduction by H. G. Wells. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

What avails it, we ask ourselves, to study rhetoric at college and to write laborious themes, when a Bunyan or a Meek can thus make our labors ridiculous and cause our favorite classic authors to pale their ineffectual fires?

Eastbourne was the birthplace and for most of his life the home of our chair-man. (The book's happy ending, with the appearance of a well-to-do uncle from Vancouver, shows why one cannot confidently assert that Eastbourne is Mr. Meek's present abiding-place.) Scanty schooling fell to the lot of George Meek, who, being early consigned to the care of a grandfather who soon afterward died, found himself obliged at a tender age to shift for himself. Worse than that, he had to work at precarious jobs for his living, and was dispossessed of his wages by an unnatural mother who returned from America, rather inopportunistically for her boy's best good, after her husband had lost his life in the Brooklyn theatre tragedy of 1876. A certain native refinement and passion for the ideal appear in the lad, according to his own account of this period. He says:

"I had few, if any, pleasures besides my reading. . . . Most of the boys I got to know through working with them were too filthy in their habits and conversation to suit me, and I made no girl friends; I was usually very badly dressed, and unless I made a few coppers unknown to my mother I never had any pocket-money. And I was naturally very shy. I buried myself as much as I could in my readings and my day-dreams to escape the irksome realities of everyday life. Unless trouble was very acute and pressing I could nearly always withdraw my mind from my environment into a land of dreams—a land which was my very own, where great and glorious things happened. This faculty I have enjoyed ever since I can remember, though of late years I find it less easy to detach myself from my surroundings, and the visions I see are less vivid."

A studious house-painter from Nottingham converted young Meek from an indifferent sort of Anglican into a firmly convinced agnostic, and he tells us that he has since had only occasional relapses into religion. But, far removed though he is from religious enthusiasm, he has always been a worshipper of the fair sex, owing, he thinks, what little strain of poetry there is in his temperament to the fact that from his earliest years he has been given to idealizing women. "Although my experience leads me to conclude that I am mistaken," he confesses, "I always like to think of them as being but a little lower than the angels." Knowing now his attitude toward religion and toward women, we have some accurate conception of the man himself. A passage here and there from his

autobiography will help to complete the picture. Of the early Eastbourne days he writes:

"As I remember, I used sometimes to have to do very hard and even dangerous work—pushing heavy tradesmen's trucks, carrying heavy loads, and standing outside second or third story windows to clean them. But while all my money was taken from me I was badly fed and clothed. Once I was at work for a well-to-do tradesman in Terminus Road; he was exceedingly religious, so much so that he would not allow his children to go to Christmas parties. One day he set me to clean out the space in front of the cellar window which was covered by a[n] iron grating in the pavement in front of his shop window. Here I found about fourpence three-farthings in coppers, and got into trouble because I stuck to it! He was a preacher for one of the obscure sects which drone their monotonous dirges (you can't call them 'hymns') in various holes and corners about the town."

To this adolescent period preceding the bath chair misery belongs also a brief experience of farming life in America—"at Warsaw, Wyoming county, U. S. A.," where dwelt a great-uncle and some cousins, and where he enjoyed the good cheer of his kinsfolks' bounteous table and the unaccustomed freedom of frontier country life; but the half-blind weakling was not the man for subduing the western wilderness, and back he soon went to the uncertain vicissitudes of unskilled labor at the smallest of wages. It was in February, 1891, that he sank, as he says, to the "profession" of bath chair-man. He presents successively the darker and the brighter side of the calling:

"If you would know the horror of black despair go out with a bath chair day after day, with chair-owner or landlord worrying you for rent, food needed at home, and get nothing. Stare till your eyes ache; pray with aching heart to a God whom you ultimately curse for His deafness. And this not for weeks, but year after year.

"Among the chair-men I have known since I first began to work at the calling seven have gone mad, many have taken to drink, others have died in the workhouse or are there still. The work demoralizes everyone in some way. It sets man against man. Some will do the meanest things to get work away from others. For instance, men have gone to my customers and told them I could not see, or that I was a Socialist, or that I drank. It is quite a common thing for me to get customers and suddenly lose them. One of the men tried to get the contract work I was doing last year away from me by telling the lady I was a Socialist, but she happened to be that *rara avis* a sensible woman and took no notice of it. In fact, she gave me some of Mr. Wells's books, besides some of the R. P. A. cheap reprints."

The author stops at this part of the book to tell the reader that he is writing in the spare moments of his heart-breaking occupation, that he has a chair weighing about three hundred-

weight to draw, and that he is not strong. But on the brighter side such cheering incidents as the following were not unknown to him:

"One Sunday in June, a few years ago, I had stood from eight in the morning till eight at night on the corner of Wilmington Square without earning a penny. I was pretty low-spirited. I was hiring my chair from a very hard man, and I had no money for him or myself either. As I pulled off the stand to go home, a gentleman called to me. I hoped he wanted to engage me, but he only wanted a light.

"'Very busy?' he asked.

"'No,' I said; 'I'm sorry to say I've been here since eight o'clock this morning and have n't had a job.'

"'That's hard lines,' he said; 'here's half a crown for you. Are you married?'

"'Yes,' I said, thanking him.

"'Any children?' he asked.

"'Yes,' I said; 'one little girl.'

"'Oh,' he said, putting his hand in his pocket, 'here's another five shillings!'"

Mr. Meek's unhesitating acceptance of such occasional offerings as the above-mentioned seems at first a little inconsistent with his evident high-mindedness and his sturdy sense of personal independence; but a starving wife and child at home will drive one to worse things than the taking of alms, and perhaps he found somewhere in his socialistic creed a justification for accepting a part of the rich man's unearned increment. In this connection may be given the concluding paragraph of his important chapter entitled "My Socialist Work":

"Although I have ceased to take a very active part in politics for some time, I am entirely in sympathy with the latter [*i. e.*, the Socialists]. Some day the workers will tire of mere politicians of every shade and will organize themselves for the definite struggle with Capitalism. Then, thoroughly grounded in the economics and ethics of Socialism, they will know what to do. It will be no great loss to the idle rich for them to live useful, healthy lives, nor to the business man to be relieved of the ever-increasing strain of competition. The worker will have no fear of unemployment or of want through sickness or old age. The reign of hatred engendered by the competition of individuals and the war of classes will give place to that of 'Peace on earth, goodwill to men.'"

The prosperous uncle's entrance on the scene, near the end of the book, and his offer of a home and a living in Vancouver to the wretched chairman and his family, seemed to Mr. Meek's publishers too much like the conventional story-book ending, and they hesitated about allowing it. But evidently they were overruled. Their own benefaction, as liberal-minded publishers, toward the new author also forms a part of the cheerful issue of the sombre narrative, as does furthermore the writer's reawakened hope to accomplish something still in the literary world. It is at present a treatise on

ethics that he has fixed his heart on writing. But he will never again make such a hit, both artistically and commercially, as he has made with his autobiography. He might now well be content to be a man of one book.

Mr. Wells's Introduction gives the reader some acquaintance with Mr. Meek in his ill-fitting and dust-covered suit of black, peering about him, walking ill, and speaking indistinctly, but never abashed, never cringing, and never other than manly and gentlemanly in his bearing. For the "despicable grammarian" Mr. Wells has supreme contempt, and certainly the grammarian would be despicable who should bring the weight of his erudition to bear on Mr. Meek's maiden effort at book-writing. Nevertheless the grammarian, and also the ungrammared reader, may wonder what number, exactly or approximately, is meant in Mr. Wells's statement that "Meek went to Ashford and met quite several men in a tiny room." Both uncritical and critical readers too will marvel at the book's display of unexpected learning side by side with something that cannot quite be called by so complimentary a name. Mr. Meek writes in an early chapter, for example, that his father and uncle, "like the Atridae," married sisters, and a few pages later speaks of a floor covered with "coker-nut matting." The literary sponsor's professed approval of what is squalid and unedifying in the book seems a little excessive. But as a part of the life-story so effectively told, these portions take their place among the rest.

PERCY F. BICKNELL.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE SOUTH: A NORTHERN VIEW.*

Just before the Civil War, Mr. Frederick Law Olmstead travelled extensively through the South and wrote a book telling what he saw. Professor Albert Bushnell Hart has recently followed in his wake, and has written a book telling something of what he saw and a good deal of what he thinks.

Professor Hart's excuse for writing this book, if excuse be necessary, is that criticism from an outsider is always illuminating. He would welcome an investigation of certain conditions in New England by a Southerner. But more than this: "In Reconstruction, the North attempted to bring about a new political system

*THE SOUTHERN SOUTH. By Albert Bushnell Hart, Litt.D. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

with the honest expectation that it would solve the race question. Surely it has a right to examine the results of its action, with a view either to justify its attitude or to accept censure for it." The result is some things to praise and some to censure in the acts and attitude of both sections. Southern people in particular should welcome the book, not simply for the pleasant things which it occasionally says about them, but for the sober treatment of several prominent questions and the searching criticisms which it offers. The South has been rightly accused of being too resentful of criticism. Professor Hart was altogether right when he said, "A social institution that was too fragile to be discussed was doomed to be broken." Certainly the Southerner is now ready to discuss the negro problem — possibly a little too ready, if the other man is a Northerner; and this seems almost to have misled Professor Hart into thinking that the negro question is by far the greatest of the Southern problems. Eight out of twenty-seven chapters of his book are devoted expressly to the negro, seven more have the negro for their key-note, and he plays at least a minor chord in practically all the rest. In spite of all that is said and printed on the subject, the vast majority of Southern people pass many a day without ever thinking of the race problem as such.

The Southern problem, according to Professor Hart, is "how twenty million Whites and ten million Negroes in the Southern States shall make up a community in which one race shall hold most of the property, and all the government, and the other race shall remain content and industrious; in which one gets most of the good things of life and the other does most of the disagreeable work; in which the superior members of the inferior race shall accept all its disadvantages; in which one race shall always be at the top and the other forever at the bottom; yet in which there shall be peace and good will." If it is true that "the Negroes, who are a third of the population, own only a fortieth of the property in the South, and that one-fourth of the negroes own four-fifths of all negro property," then the problem is simply the world-old and world-wide question of the privileged few against the unprivileged many, complicated in this case by racial differences, antipathies, and prejudices, which the North once insisted should be ignored. Whether these differences are right or wrong, they are a "condition and not a theory," and must be dealt with accordingly.

Another excuse given by Professor Hart for writing the book is that the North "has expert knowledge of race troubles and of ways to solve them," and that it may "offer something out of its own experience." This is not intended for humor. The "something" to offer is the Indian problem,—not the earlier solution of indiscriminate killing, which is rightly reprobated when applied to the negro, but the "land-in-severalty plan."

When the Athenian envoys were defending at Sparta the policy of Athens in subjecting the other cities of Greece to her sway, they said: "The world has ever held that the weaker must be kept down by the stronger." And a great part of mankind has ever been kept in subjection of one kind or another. Yet voices have cried out against such monstrous philosophy, and it is no longer openly defended. On the contrary, we now accept the opposite philosophy, that the strong must help the weak to rise, though we are a little slow in putting it into practice. When the French serfs were freed they were not at once given land; but in the general shakeup which immediately followed many of them managed to secure some. A few years later when the German peasant was freed he was given a liberal portion of the land he had tilled for centuries. At the very time when the bonds were being stricken from our slaves, the Russian serfs were given lands, though on conditions they never could fulfil, conditions which were finally removed in the recent Russian revolution. Even Great Britain is at last atoning for centuries of wrong by helping the Irish to acquire land. But it was left to democratic America to strike the shackles of slavery from millions of men, and then give them the ballot instead of bread — *i. e.*, land on which to make it. Not only did they give the freedmen no land; they even left to an impoverished section practically the whole task of educating them.

The "forty acres and a mule" dream of the negroes was one which the nation rested under some obligations to fulfil. Professor Hart's explanation of the reason why this was not done is that the North was so blind that it "honestly supposed" that "the ballot would at the same time protect the black against white aggression, and would educate him into the sense of such responsibility that there would be no negro aggression." This is simply the old mistake of eighteenth and nineteenth century political philosophy, that political and civil liberty is a panacea for all our social ills. Do the ballot

and the writ of *habeas corpus* protect the steel workers of Pittsburg, the coal miners of wherever there is coal, or the sweatshop workers of wherever there are sweatshops? What men need is genuine economic freedom — not the *laissez faire* kind — and the right to protect themselves in its possession. The North was a little behind Europe in 1865 on this question; but had she reached its full solution then, she would have been decidedly in advance of the rest of the world.

Now, it seems, the South is to be left alone in the solution of her peculiarly difficult problem; for Professor Hart tells us that a propaganda is no longer possible, — “the North has too much on its own hands in curing the political diseases of its cities, in absorbing the foreigners,” and, he ought to have added, in settling the relations of labor and capital. The South was a little slow in rejecting the ancient Greek philosophy of subjection. She, in common with the rest of this country, has accepted the antithesis of this doctrine — that of helpfulness. A social philosophy which reverses the old order is sometimes slow to be realized in working institutions; but the South has at last made a beginning. When the North has solved its social and economic problems, beside which the curing of the political diseases of the cities is but a summer pastime, perhaps the South will have made some progress. Meantime it is helpful to the South to know that she has the generous sympathy of the North, which now recognizes that she is sincere.

DAVID Y. THOMAS.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE SOUTH: AN ENGLISH VIEW.*

The English journalist and author, Mr. William Archer, has written a book on the American Race Problem, with this dedication: “To H. G. Wells, with whom I so rarely disagree that when I do I must needs write a book about it.” Since Mr. Wells, in “The Future of America,” came to the conclusion that the Southern whites were wholly wrong in their attitude toward their race problems, we expect to find quite a different account in Mr. Archer's book. And so we do. But it is not undiscriminating in its sympathy for the views of the

Southern whites, and it is full of interesting facts, discussions, and opinions; while in many matters the author exhibits a freshness of thought and an originality of ideas that are welcome to one weary of the stale American arguments and conventional statements. The book contains accounts of the author's travels in the South, in Cuba, and in Panama; of his observations of negro life in city and country, of negro homes and schools, of the relations between the races, of “jim crow” cars, serfdom, and prohibition. Brief quotations from the Introduction will give Mr. Archer's conception of the American Race Problem:

“Ought the colour-lines drawn by Nature to be enforced by human ordinance, and even by geographical segregation? Or ought they to be gradually obliterated by free intermingling and intermarriage. Or, while intermarriage is forbidden (whether by law or public sentiment), is it possible for people of different colours to dwell together in approximately equal numbers and on terms of democratic equality? Or is it for the benefit of both races that one race should always maintain, by social and political discriminations, its superiority over the other? Or is this opinion a mere hypocritical disguise of the instinct which begot, and maintained throughout the ages, the institution of slavery?”

“The truth is, it seems to me, that no race problem, properly so called, arises until two races are found occupying the same territory in such an approach to equal numbers as to make it a serious question which colour shall ultimately predominate.”

“The race problem means (in its only convenient definition) the problem of adjustment between two very dissimilar populations, locally intermingled in such proportions that the one feels its racial identity potentially threatened, while the other knows itself in constant danger of economic exploitation. Now these conditions, as a matter of experience, arise only where a race of very high development is brought into contact with a race of very low development, and only where the race of low development is at the same time tenacious of life and capable of resisting the poisons of civilization. In other words, the race problem, as here defined, is a purely Afro-European or Afro-American problem.”

The views and actions of the Southern whites, Mr. Archer considers natural, — under the circumstances, normal. He declares that there is no other race-problem in the world, and never has been except in the South, for never elsewhere did such conditions exist. His opinions may be summed up briefly: The problem is acute, and no solution is evident; the “jim crow” car, etc., is necessary; the white South is very wrong in its indifference to the abuses of labor laws, resulting in peonage; the prohibition movement has been good for the negro; the average negro desires the amalgamation of

*THROUGH AFRO-AMERICA. An English Reading of the Race Problem. By William Archer. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

the races, and the Southern whites know that he wants it; negro civilization is only a veneer. The author insists upon one principle: that the whole trouble is due to physical dissimilarity. The negro to him is so grotesque a being, so unlike the white, that he is repelled. "The permanent difficulty underlying all impermanent ones, that time, education, Christian charity, and soap and water may remove, is that of sheer *unlikeness*. Oh! they are terribly unlike, these two races!" But "if the Ethiopian could but change his skin, how trifling would be the problem raised by his ignorance, shiftlessness, poverty, and crime!" For a solution, Mr. Archer suggests the four threadbare possibilities: Extinction; the Atlanta Compromise; Amalgamation; Segregation. The first and third being out of the question, he prefers the fourth. That the Atlanta Compromise — the suggestion of Booker T. Washington that each race will work out its own destiny, within its own sphere, each race aiding the other — will ever come to pass, he doubts. Will not the work of the Tuskegees and the Hamptons, the industrial training of the negro, create a new form of friction? "I did not doubt for a moment," he says, "that Mr. Washington's work was wise and salutary; but I wondered whether the material and moral uplifting of the negro was going to bring peace — or a sword. In other words, do the essential and fundamental defects of the situation really lie in the defects of the negro race?" An important phase of the problem, usually slurred over by writers on this subject, is dwelt upon by Mr. Archer: the psychological effect of the constant uneasiness of the whites, especially the lower classes, about their women. Herein, of course, lies one important cause of the frequent furious and seemingly causeless outbreaks of whites against negroes. While sympathizing with the Southern whites, the author nevertheless points out some inconsistencies and weaknesses in their position. He is probably not altogether just in his estimate of negro home-life, of the domestic melioration attained by the upper class of negroes — "resolute refinement," he calls it, "veneer." The boasted negro homes, he says, are not homes at all, but mere "imitative and mechanical tributes to the American ideal of the prosperous and cultivated homes." There might be more justification in this criticism were it not also true of a very large number of the homes of whites.

WALTER L. FLEMING.

THE GENTLE ART OF "SICHELIZING."*

Mr. Walter Sichel is known on both sides of the Atlantic for a series of biographies culminating last year in a life of Sheridan. His books have made a favorable impression on many reviewers, as they well might; for the style is vivacious, and a large part of the matter appears, on first sight, to be new. After the publication of the Sheridan biography, however Mr. Sichel's extensive claims to originality, announced in the preface and repeated many times in footnotes and elsewhere, began to be questioned in private and, eventually, in the press. It was intimated that, although Mr. Sichel had indeed added to our knowledge of Sheridan, he had also drawn heavily upon the life of Sheridan by the late Mr. W. Fraser Rae, while treating his memory with scant courtesy; that he apparently claimed to be the first to call attention to literary parallels which had been observed by other writers on Sheridan; and that in his bibliography he marked by asterisks several editions of Sheridan's works and single plays as his own discoveries, though they may be found in other and earlier bibliographies of Sheridan. Mr. Sichel, it has been alleged, did all this while he professed acquaintance with "every known and some unknown editions" of Sheridan.

Then came, last spring, Mr. Sichel's "Sterne: A Study," within a year after the publication of the "Life and Times of Laurence Sterne," by the writer of this review. Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, "a pioneer" in Sterne studies, after reading the new book, sent a letter to the London "Saturday Review" (April 30), protesting against Mr. Sichel's literary methods, to describe which he coined the verb "sichelize" after the analogy of "bowdlerize" derived from Dr. Thomas Bowdler, who spent his time in mutilating Shakespeare in the interest of public morality. According to Mr. Fitzgerald, "to sichelize" means to re-hash old facts and old ideas so as to give the impression that they are new. To quote him directly, — "Mr. Sichel's system is to come along after the hard-working harvest-men have gone home to rest, and help himself from their granaries." A biographer may of course refer, in his preface or in an occasional footnote, to previous laborers in the same field; but these acknowledgments should be on unessential points, or on points of disagreement, in order that the impression of

*STERNE. A Study. By Walter Sichel. To which added "The Journal to Eliza." London: Williams & Norgate. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.

indebtedness may be kept within reasonable bounds; and while claiming to bring to bear upon his work a large amount of "unpublished" or "unnoticed" material, he must really add a new document or two, else he will have nothing whatever to stand upon in case the day of reckoning ever comes. Mr. Sichel, for example, has made use of two letters in his new book not accessible to other biographers, and of a memorandum and two other letters which, though previously published elsewhere, had never been quoted in a life of Sterne. He also publishes for the first time two or more second-rate portraits of Sterne and an interesting portrait of Mrs. Sterne, if indeed it be Mrs. Sterne. He really had enough new material for a letter to a weekly periodical, but not quite enough for a magazine article. Now the reviewer has no quarrel with anyone over the use he may make of the "Life and Times of Laurence Sterne," for the book now belongs to the public. It has been amusing rather than annoying to see Mr. Sichel tossing about, as stale and time-worn, the results of others' investigations before they were a year old, or treating conjectures as facts, though the writer of them now knows some of them not to be such. One may congratulate himself on escaping better than Mr. Fitzgerald, who seems to have been converted by one of Mr. Sichel's references into a certain "Mr. FitzPatrick." For further consolation, we are here reminded how Professor Lounsbury recently lost much more than his identity under the feminine hand of the author of a recent biography called "Mr. Pope: His Life and Times." Doubtless others also observed, on reading this life of Pope, that Miss Symonds was under great obligations to Professor Lounsbury for certain of her chapters, and that her only acknowledgement was a mere reference in her preface to Mrs. [sic] Lounsbury's "valuable book." In these days of "sichelizing," one should be thankful that he is not unsexed!

It will be instructive as well as amusing to illustrate Mr. Sichel's apparent literary methods, for if "sichelize" and its derivatives are to come into common use we should know what the words mean. Here is a sichelism lying on the surface, to be picked up by anyone:

Fifty-odd pages of Mr. Sichel's book are given over to the publication of Sterne's "Journal to Eliza." Without exactly saying so, Mr. Sichel implies in his preface that he is publishing the Journal for the first time. His English publishers and the English reviewers have so announced it or congratulated him upon it. When

Mr. Sichel's attention was subsequently called to the fact that the Journal had been published in New York back in 1904 as a part of the works of Sterne, his retort was that "the Journal may have been transcribed in Germany or Kamschatka," but that he was the first to publish it in England. Not quite satisfied, perhaps, with the implication that an English imprint (Germany and the United States not counting at all) is necessary to publication, Mr. Sichel went on to say that he really never claimed to publish the document for the first time. His publishers and the reviewers had only inferred it, he said, from a paragraph in the preface beginning "Fresh matter assists these pages" and ending with "the entire Journal to Eliza speaks for itself" ("Saturday Review," 25th June). Mr. Sichel seems to have forgotten a paragraph in his book (page 17) relative to the "unpublished 'Journal to Eliza,' which will be found at the end of this volume."

In a similar manner Mr. Sichel presents Sterne's correspondence. Letters are introduced with a declaration that they are "new" or with a sentence from which the uninformed reader infers that they are new, though they may be found in previous biographies or in various editions of Sterne's works. And so it is with other minor documents. On page 69, for instance, Mr. Sichel takes up Sterne's "Dream" with the remark that it "deserves more attention than it has received," when as a matter of fact it has received from M. Paul Stapfer (who first published it) and from other writers on Sterne, five times the attention devoted to it by Mr. Sichel. More curious still, a letter on page 169 (which Mr. Sichel says "finds no place in the printed collections") appears with a superscription, though there is none in the existing manuscript of the letter or in the letter as hitherto published. Again, M. Tollot, one of Sterne's Continental friends, never quite identified, is several times mentioned by Mr. Sichel as "the Abbé Tollot" (see pp. 215 and 227); but there seems to be no warrant for the title except that an educated Frenchman of the eighteenth century was sometimes an abbé. And so Mr. Sichel proceeds merrily through his volume.

Another form of sichelism is Mr. Sichel's claim to some fact or incident which we are informed has been "unnoticed" or "unperceived" or "missed" by other writers on Sterne, and consequently first noticed or perceived by himself. Out of many sichelisms of this kind, we may cite two or three. On page 34 is the "unnoticed fact" that Sterne has in one of the

later volumes of "Tristram Shandy" a Curate D'Estella, as if in memory of the romantic retreat called D'Estella where he courted Miss Lumley in his youth. This fact was noticed many years ago by Mr. Fitzgerald in his "Life of Sterne" (I. 28). Again, it is implied in Mr. Sichel's preface that he has discovered that the "Jenny" of "Tristram Shandy" is the "Kitty" of Sterne's correspondence. But all this is in Fitzgerald (I. 105-106). On page 129, Mr. Sichel goes so far as to say that the reference to "Kitty" in the last installment of "Tristram Shandy" (1767) "has never yet been noticed," and then proceeds to quote the references to her down to 1767, much as they have appeared in other biographies of Sterne. And, finally, Mr. Sichel says (p. 155) that "the real cause" of the meeting between Sterne and Warburton "has escaped biographers, who have removed the incident to a subsequent phase of their squabble." The "real cause" of the meeting and the approximate date of it (all that Mr. Sichel gives) have been given by Fitzgerald, Traill, Sidney Lee, and by the present reviewer, who, in fact, stated the exact day of the first meeting along with the incidents that led up to it ("Life and Times of Sterne," pp. 196-198). Who are—one may ask—the biographers of Sterne?

Were there space for it, it would be equally amusing to illustrate the perils attending sichelization, from the numerous misstatements, outside of claims, in Mr. Sichel's volume. On page 106, we are told, for example, that Sterne's "Watch-Coat" was "only posthumously printed." The "Watch-Coat," as printed in Sterne's lifetime (before the appearance of "Tristram Shandy" and "The Sentimental Journey") is fully described in the "Life and Times of Sterne" (pp. 164-177 and 531). But, to proceed no further, Mr. Sichel, when confronted with his claims and misstatements, replies that they are unimportant, for it was not his intention to write a biography of Sterne. A pertinent question in rejoinder is, Why make claims if they are unimportant? Indeed, his book would stand the test no better if it were examined as a study. If Mr. Sichel is acquainted with the literature on Sterne, he must know that the aspects in which he has presented him, as humorist, sentimentalist, dreamer, and precursor of modern impressionism, have nothing novel about them at all. It was perhaps worth while to re-work the old mines; but it savors of the promoter to advertise them as fresh discoveries.

W. L. CROSS.

BRIEFS ON NEW BOOKS.

Mark Twain's
premeditated
impromptus.

It is a wise word that the publishers of "Mark Twain's Speeches" (Harper) have chosen from his own writings as a prefatory caution to the reader:—"There is no more sin in publishing an entire volume of nonsense than there is in keeping a candy-store with no hardware in it. It lies wholly with the customer whether he will injure himself by means of either, or will derive from them the benefits which they will afford him if he uses their possibilities judiciously." As occasional reading, these speeches, delivered at various times in the last four decades of his life, are generally of a nature to entertain and to amuse, although their quiet perusal may not move the reader, to praise them quite so highly as does Mr. Howells, who heard many of them at banquet or other festal occasion, and who contributes a brief introduction to the volume. We learn from him, without surprise, that it was his friend's practice to prepare his oratorical exercises beforehand, to commit them carefully to memory, and to study their probable effect on his hearers. If the reader cannot always catch that spirit of conviviality and of cordial readiness to applaud even a labored witticism which commonly smooths the path of the after-dinner speaker, he can at least admire and enjoy the neatness and probably telling effect of many of the humorous turns taken by these short speeches. But there is little need, at this late day, to call attention to the qualities of Mark Twain's inimitable oratory. One fault we have to find, not with the book, but rather with the publishers. Their announcement on the wrapper says that "here will be found the speech delivered at Oxford when he received the Doctor's degree from that university, . . . the address delivered at the Aldrich Memorial meeting, etc." The *et cetera* we have easily found, but have turned every page in the book three times in vain search for the Aldrich memorial address and the alleged Oxford utterance. Mark Twain could defy the conventionalities, but we had not before heard that he astonished the assembled Oxonians by making a speech on the receipt of his doctorate. Hence the keenness of our disappointment in not finding this promised gem of oratory. Otherwise, the book is, in its way, all that could be desired.

"The ugly
duckling of
literature."

The confessed desire of Miss Sophie Shilleto Smith, in her recent volume on Dean Swift and his circle of friends (Putnam) is to refute certain unjust slanders and a few generally accepted beliefs about the character of one of the most interesting and perplexing figures in the history of literature and of the Church. The tone of the book from cover to cover is that of an *apologia*, and the author's admiration for her subject causes her to magnify his sensitiveness and dominating influence while she denounces his enemies in no mild phrases. In somewhat prismatic

imagery she says, in her Introduction: "I have written the life neither of a saint nor a fiend; I have neither dragged him down to hell nor raised him to heaven, I have dressed him neither in black nor in white; I have not attired him in scarlet, nor endowed him with a cloven foot, setting him to dance among friends worse than himself." With strong emphasis upon his sunless childhood and friendless youth, she portrays Swift as "the ugly duckling of the literary world." Poverty and disease, two factors which influenced his whole life, were "heritages" from his youth; and his boyhood memories seem to have been largely grievances. With frequent excuses for his mistakes and their consequences, the author traces Swift's career as secretary to Sir William Temple, whom she calls "a moral iceberg," and interweaves much of political history into her account of the positions of influence in State and Church which came to Swift, in his manhood, as a result of his early association with Temple. The personality of Swift is not presented with graphic effect in many parts of this biography; and the reader must turn to the more lucid though briefer life by Leslie Stephen to elucidate certain references that are indefinite or unsequential in Miss Smith's pages. But in spite of defects of structure and frequent heaviness of style, the story of Swift's life is told faithfully, and certain portions show intuitive touches—as the revelation of his disappointed hopes and ambitions, his cramped environment at Laracor, his sensitiveness to slights and misjudgments, and his disfavor with Queen Anne. The innate belief of Swift in his own powers, his assurance of an unfulfilled "vocation," and his dominating influence, almost brutal in kind, over both men and women, are emphasized. There is no new interpretation here of his relations with "Stella" and "Vanessa," although the author justifies, to her own mind, his imperiousness towards them. Incidental attention is given throughout the book to Swift's writings, and a later chapter deals with "The Poet and the Moralist."

*Libraries and
library science
in America.*

Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick's pleasantly descriptive and attractively illustrated account of "The American Public Library" (Appleton) is intended for both library workers and general readers. It is scholarly, and at the same time not too technical to be of general interest. The author's experience as librarian in New York, Brooklyn, and St. Louis, where he not long ago succeeded Mr. Crunden as head of the public library of that city, and his recent holding of the presidency of the American Library Association, are a sufficient warrant of his ability to write understandingly on his chosen subject. Partly historical, but more largely descriptive and wisely suggestive, his book contains (for the somewhat bookish, at least) a greater amount of agreeable reading than its title might indicate. While he maintains a judiciously dispassionate attitude toward most questions

of library policy, contenting himself with presenting the arguments on both sides of such questions, he occasionally lets us see which way his bias tends, as in the open-shelf and closed-shelf controversy, and in the treatment of juvenile users of the library. Free access to a large part of the books and special attention to the young folk, including the increasingly popular story-hour, are favored by him. In a few matters of detail, the all but impossibility of attaining strict accuracy in a work of this sort is illustrated. His useful list of "State library commissions, with official name of commission or board and title of executive officer," gives for Maryland, "Maryland Public Library Commission: Secretary," whereas the current report of this commission indicates that it should be, "Maryland State Library Commission: President." Further, the table of "American public libraries circulating over 100,000 yearly" is less nearly up-to-date than might have been expected. Dr. Bostwick's scholarly work deserves a place beside such accepted books of its kind as Edwards's "Memoirs of Libraries," Mr. Fletcher's "Public Libraries in America," and Professor H. B. Adams's "Public Libraries and Popular Education."

*A study of
mental
vagaries.*

Dr. Isador H. Coriat's main purpose in the writing of his volume entitled "Abnormal Psychology" (Moffat, Yard & Co.) is an admirable one, as is likewise the plan upon which he proceeds. He groups the abnormal phenomena of the mind about the conception of the Subconscious, making Part I. the exploration of the Subconscious and Part II. the diseases of the Subconscious. In all that pertains to the clinical evidence and the description of cases and data, some of them original and all well-described and related, the work may be commended. Its chief lack is in furnishing the lay reader with a careful analysis of the concepts indispensable to the understanding of the wayward and irregular appearances which it is the business of abnormal psychology to set in order. The same criticism applies within the first division, in which there is a clear setting forth of the recent methods of analyzing mental states and of revealing hidden motives and obstacles; but a decidedly less clear account of the significance of the observations. The scope of the work and the interest of the problems seem so admirably suited to disseminate a rational understanding of what is often sensationally and misleadingly considered, that it is a matter of regret that a work so well planned should fail in what after all is an essential consideration, that of a clearer analysis and a richer setting of the objective data. None the less, considering the imperfections of contributions in this field which aim to instruct and often mislead the public, Dr. Coriat's work will form a welcome addition to the group of books that are coming to be called for on the shelves of many a library. It is possible that if the author had more

carefully and more generously indicated his obligations to other writers, and had introduced brief formulas which have already been reached in this field, the defect of his more general statements would have been relieved.

Occasional essays on books and authors.

Four of Professor William P. Trent's papers in the volume entitled "Longfellow and Other Essays" (Crowell) were prepared in celebration of centenary, bicentenary, or tricentenary events in the literary world; some were written as introductions to new editions of standard works; while two at least have a more evident spontaneity than their fellows. The entire ten, however, though a little stale, from a publisher's point of view, are surprisingly fresh and attractive to the reader. To say the appropriate and significant thing so wittily and so well as does Professor Trent on the occasion of a literary anniversary gives literary anniversaries an adequate excuse for being. Beside Longfellow, he briefly treats Spenser, Johnson, Milton, and Poe, and also discusses the relations of history and literature, Scott's "Heart of Midlothian," Daudet's "Tartarin" books, and Thackeray's verses, and gives a wholesome talk to would-be teachers. His style is warmed with a quiet humor and brightened at times with a flashing wit, while beneath all lies the sound scholarship without which the rest would be but emptiness and vanity. His Poe-enthusiasm crops out in frequent passing references to the subject of his closing essay, which itself was delivered before the Johns Hopkins University at the exercises in honor of the hundredth anniversary of Poe's birth. An incidental mention of Sir Walter Raleigh brings out the curious fact that the commonly accepted spelling of his name is "the only way out of some seventy odd forms that he seems never to have used." Nevertheless Professor Trent still writes "Raleigh," and not "Ralegh" or any other form. As another matter of minute detail, why does he say "financial" when he means "pecuniary"? So thoroughly readable a collection of occasional essays does not often appear.

A little-known painter of the Sieneſe ſchool.

Although frequently small as to size, the books of Mr. Bernhard Berenson are never otherwise than significant as to art criticism. His latest volume, "A Sieneſe Painter of the Franciſcan Legend" (Lane), contains only ſeventy pages, and is a reprint of two articles published in "The Burlington Magazine" ſix years ago. The purpoſe of the book is to ſhow that, as a painter of Franciſcan ideals, there was a greater even than Giotto — one Stefano Sassetta, born in Siena in 1392. That this comparatively little-known man is a greater artiſt than Giotto, Mr. Berenson does not claim, but that he was more lyrical, more rapturous, with an imagination of a type better fitted to penetrate the open ſecret of Franciſcan doctrine, Mr. Berenson inſiſts with emphasis and ſtrong conviction. He places ſide by

ſide collotype illuſtrations of fourteen paintings by Sassetta, five by Giotto, and four of the ſchool of Giotto, — the latter being thoſe over the tomb of St. Francis in the Lower Church at Aſſiſi, commonly aſcribed to Giotto himſelf, but which Mr. Berenson and Profeſſor Venturi now unite in attributing to his followers. As an adequate rendering of the Franciſcan ſoul in art, according to Mr. Berenson, the whole range of painting offers nothing equal to Sassetta's nine panels, now ſcattered, but once forming the front and back of a ſingle altar-piece. Mr. Berenson is himſelf the owner of the triptych forming the print. In its ſuggeſtions of an ecſtatic harmony with the ſpirit of all things, there is but one picture in European art which approaches it — Raphael's Transfiguration, in its upper portion. And even that is inferior, owing to its being leſs ſimply, leſs flatly deſigned, and to its relatively greater realism, both in the figures and the landſcape. In concluſion, Mr. Berenson finds that Sassetta was not only one of the few maſters in Europe of imaginative deſign, but the moſt important painter at Siena during the ſecond quarter of the fifteenth century, the channel through which Sieneſe Trecento traditions paſſed and became transformed into thoſe of the Quattrocento, nearly all the later painters of Siena being hiſ offspring.

The progreſs of the race through art.

"The Aſcending Effort" (Dutton), by Mr. George Bourne, owes its title to Emereſon's obſervation, in "The Conduct of Life," that "no ſtatement of the Univerſe can have any ſoundneſs which does not admit its aſcending effort." The all-important factor in this aſcending effort, according to Mr. Bourne, is the art inſtinct, art being conceived of as "a form of energy able to ſet up freſh energies in our physical being." With this broad meaning aſſigned to art, which itſelf is ſubdivided into fine art, craft, and play, it becomes eaſily poſſible to elaborate a theory of human development and ſocial progreſs that preſents many attractive features and beautifully explains many of the phenomena of individual and ſocial evolution. There is, however, ſomething almoſt too mechanical, too fataliſtic, in parts of Mr. Bourne's doctrine to make it thoroughly inſpiring; as for inſtance: "At every hour of man's exiſtence the ſame ſpecific vitality which aſſembled the tiſſues of hiſ body and gave them its own impreſs before he was born continues to aſſert itſelf. It leads him to approve in other people certain things for imitation; it ſuggeſts hiſ thoughts, and is the mainſpring of hiſ ambitions; while to everything he does it gives its bias." Excellent, on the other hand, is hiſ conception of art as aiming always at a noble ideal that never is but always to be achieved, as "toiling on for centuries at a taſk never to be finiſhed, providing the fine experiences from which choice ideas may be fashioned. . . . Still the tales of paſſion and adventure have to be rewritten, the dramas to be composed anew, the aſpects of land and ſea and people to be

repainted. . . .” Except that he makes art too inclusive, playing the parts of several other actors in the great drama, Mr. Bourne writes convincingly and well. There is moral and intellectual uplift in his book.

Wage-earning women and their problems.

Another volume on working-women and their problems, written from a slightly different angle to that of previous treatments, is Miss MacLean's "Wage-Earning Women" (Macmillan). The contents comprise some of the results of an investigation carried on under the auspices of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association, and managed by the editor. A very wide field of industry and extent of territory were covered, the definite purpose being to discover the actual social conditions under which women all over the country labor, with a view to basing betterment work on this first-hand knowledge. The fields of labor chosen for investigation were those of paper, clothing, shoes, and textile manufactures in New England, New York City, and Chicago; work in the New Jersey towns; women toilers in the Middle West, with special reference to Iowa and Michigan; hop-picking in Oregon; the fruit industries of California; and women in the coal-fields of Pennsylvania. In addition, the actual improvement agencies already at work are described, and definite recommendations for still further improvement are made. The book is distinctly constructive, its chief value lying in its numerous suggestions for social betterment. But in form it is fragmentary and disconnected. One feels that greater fidelity and fulness might have been secured if the separate investigations had been described directly by their investigators, leaving it to the editor merely to summarize and interpret the whole.

A rolling stone in the world of business.

More than once in the course of his autobiographical narrative entitled "Astir: A Publisher's Life-Story" (Small, Maynard & Co.), Mr. John Adams Thayer refers to himself as a rolling stone and disclaims any desire to gather moss, which he says is for ruins, not for wide-awake men. A "moss-back" he most certainly is not, as the account of his commercial successes in printing, publishing, advertising (his own goods and other people's), magazine-booming, and other kindred activities, makes plain. Of course the chief triumph of his career thus far has been the immense success of "Everybody's Magazine," which Mr. Lawson's "Frenzied Finance" and other popular features lifted speedily to a circulation of half a million and more a month. Less familiar to the public, but of almost equal interest, is the story of how Mr. Thayer and the Napoleonic Mr. Munsey tried for a month and a day to pull together in double harness. One especial service rendered by Mr. Thayer to the cause of honesty in the publishing world must not be overlooked. He discountenanced and, as far as he could, suppressed the fraudulent advertisement, the advertisement calcu-

lated to catch the dollars of the sick and the feeble-minded. But he has left abundant work for others in this field of reform. On the reverse of his title-page appears an announcement somewhat remarkable in its form: "Published also in French under the title 'Les Etapes du Succès; Souvenirs d'un "business man" Américaine.'" Whatever his other attributes, there is nothing feminine or effeminate about this American business man. His is a virile tale, set forth with no maiden coyness.

BRIEFER MENTION.

A few years ago, Miss Lucy H. Humphreys prepared a poetic anthology which she entitled "The Poetic Old World." She has now given us a companion volume on "The Poetic New World," issued by the same publishers (Holt & Co.). The pieces selected are essentially poems of places—those which reflect touches of local color combined with historic associations. Such a collection must necessarily lack the element of completeness, and represent largely the personal tastes of the compiler. Miss Humphreys's collection is interesting, and is presented in a compact and charming little volume which will find its place in the regard of poetry-lovers.

The hoary superstitions concerning the deadly perils lurking in fresh air are giving way before the demonstrations of science. In his little book on "Open-Air Schools" (Doubleday), Dr. Leonard P. Ayres, of the Department of Child Hygiene, Russell Sage Foundation, gives the history of this interesting educational development from its origin in the Charlottenburg Forest School, started in 1904, through similar establishments elsewhere in Germany, in England, in Porto Rico, and in this country, down to the latest open-air schools of Hartford, Rochester, and Pittsburg. An appended bibliography of half a hundred titles gives some idea of the interest in this subject even so soon awakened both here and abroad. The book is copiously illustrated, and well provided with tables and charts in graphic demonstration of the merits of this movement "back to nature."

"The School Department Room" is briefly but ably and clearly handled by Mr. John Cotton Dana in the latest number of his pamphlet series of expert treatises on "Modern American Library Economy as Illustrated by the Newark, N. J., Public Library" (Elm Tree Press, Newark). After a few pages of excellent doctrine on the public library's legitimate place in the educational scheme, Mr. Dana describes, with aid of a diagram, the Newark library's children's room, and the work it sets itself to perform. Concerning the very natural and commendable interest in children manifested by many librarians, he says: "I do believe that we have allowed a pardonable enthusiasm to carry us too far. In the story-hour, for example, we have permitted our delight in the pleasure we can give, almost casually, to a very few of the children in our respective communities, to blind us to the fact that we are, when we take up such work, not only stepping into another's field, but grievously neglecting our own." The little treatise deserves a wider reading than that of the learners in library science for whom the series is especially designed.

NOTES.

Mr. Francis Ferris Greenslet, a well-known writer and critic, formerly associate editor of "The Atlantic Monthly," and for three years chief literary adviser of the Houghton Mifflin Company, has been elected a director of the company.

The Memoirs of Goldwin Smith, which are to be published shortly by the Macmillan Co., will give a very full story of his life, beginning with his earliest days and ending with certain chapters dealing with his later years that were dictated only a few weeks before his death.

Of foremost interest among literary announcements of the Fall season are the "Life and Letters of Edmund Clarence Stedman," by his granddaughter, Miss Laura Stedman, which Messrs. Moffat, Yard & Co. will publish; and the "Life and Letters of William Sharp," prepared by his wife, which is announced by Messrs. Duffield & Co.

The success of Mr. Owen Johnson's later Lawrenceville stories has led the Baker & Taylor Co. to issue a new edition of the first Lawrenceville volume, "The Eternal Boy," now published as "The Prodigious Hickey." Mr. Johnson's lively portrait of the American "prep" schoolboy seems not unlikely to take a place on the same shelf with "Stalky & Co."

"The Athenæum" makes the interesting announcement that Sir George Trevelyan intends to finish his "History of the American Revolution" by another volume, written on a new plan, and with a complete change of treatment. It will deal largely with Parliamentary and social interests, and the English and European aspects of the Revolution.

An extended work on "The Literature of the South," by Mr. Montrose J. Moses, is announced by Messrs. Crowell. The book comprises a study of the subject from its beginning to the present time, and includes criticism of all the modern Southern writers. This work is the result of several years' research and study on the part of the author.

Messrs. A. C. McClurg & Co., whose general publishing business has been developed during the past few years to a very large extent, have now entered the educational field. They have engaged to take charge of this branch of their publishing business, Mr. C. E. Ricketts, for many years connected with one of the largest school-book houses in the country.

Dr. Arthur Howard Noll, the author of "A Short History of Mexico" and "From Empire to Republic," has written, in collaboration with Mr. A. Philip McMahon, an account of Miguel Hidalgo, "the Father of Mexican Independence." The book will be published early this month by Messrs. A. C. McClurg & Co., under the title "The Life and Times of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla."

A Centenary edition de luxe of Thackeray's works, which will contain, in addition to the original illustrations, a series of five hundred new plates by Mr. Harry Furniss, has been arranged for publication next year by Messrs. Macmillan. There is also in preparation for the centenary of Thackeray a new revision of the "Biographical Edition," for which Lady Ritchie has rearranged the biographical prefaces, making various changes and additions. The edition will be in twenty-six volumes, and the issue will begin, it is hoped, in the Autumn.

"A Midsummer Memory: An Elegy on the late Arthur Upson," by his friend and fellow poet, Dr. Richard Burton, is announced for publication next month by Mr. Edmund D. Brooks of Minneapolis. Mr. Brooks's name is closely associated with that of Upson, as he was the publisher of half a dozen volumes of the brilliant young poet's work, including the two-volume Memorial Edition of which Dr. Burton was the editor. The Elegy will be issued in an edition of five hundred copies printed from type upon hand-made paper.

Under the title of "A Modern Outlook: Studies of English and American Tendencies," Mr. J. A. Hobson is about to publish, through an English house, a selection from the essays on society and literature which he has contributed to the London "Nation" during the past three years. The contents of the book fall under five headings: "Life and Letters," "The Woman of the Future," "American Traits," "The Church of the Future," and "Of Politics." It is to be hoped that these discerning and finely-written studies may find an American publisher also.

News of the death, on August 26, of William James, for over twenty years professor of psychology at Harvard University, reaches us just as we go to press. Professor James was called to London several months ago by the sickness of his brother, Mr. Henry James. A month ago he himself became ill, and upon his arrival in Quebec two weeks ago he was taken at once to his summer home at Chocorua, New Hampshire, where he died. More extended mention of Professor James's notable career and accomplishment will be given in our next issue.

TOPICS IN LEADING PERIODICALS.

September, 1910.

Actor, The Young, and Patience. Walter P. Eaton. *American*.
Advertising Men, Earnings of. Algernon Tassin. *Bookman*.
Africa, Wild Animals in. Guy H. Scull. *Everybody's*.
African Game Trails—XII. Theodore Roosevelt. *Scribner*.
Albany Gang, The. Burton J. Hendrick. *McClure*.
America's Far Eastern Policy. "Britannicus." *No. American*.
Art Prattle. Elihu Vedder. *Atlantic*.
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